

St Mary Magdalen Ipswich - Finance Committee Minutes

Meeting held in the Garden Room on Friday 18th February 2022

1. Present

Fr. Paul, Linis Dolby, Declan Moore, Andrew Ford & Chris Croker

2. Apologies for absence

None required

3. Minutes of previous Finance Committee meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th October 2021 were approved; matters arising were as follows:

Finance - It was noted that we are now receiving approx. £100 per month from use of the church by other religious groups although this is likely to reduce in 2022 as one group is moving elsewhere.

5. Financial Position

A summary of the accounts for the 12 months ending December 2021 was distributed which showed the parish making an operating deficit on general funds of £8.4k.

This was mainly due to higher spending than normal on property maintenance which this year included reroofing the Guild Room kitchen/toilet block (£2.7k), rewiring of the church and electrical works to the hall (£5.1k), refurbishment of the presbytery including complete recarpeting and replacement of some old furniture/furnishings (£8.4k).

Income was affected by a number of factors including a lack of hall rent in the first 4 months of the year due to Covid restrictions (£2k) and a reduction of Alive in Faith income applied to general funds now that the first phase has been completed (£3.9k). These reductions were however offset by receipt of a grant from the LD Rope charity of £3k and accrual of Giftaid tax rebate receivable but not yet claimed for the tax year commencing April 2021 of £3.5k.

Cash at bank totalled £5.7k at the end of December and total funds including amounts owed and owing totalled £14.8k reflecting an outflow of £84.2k during the year mainly due to expenditure on the new Parish room.

A proposed budget for 2022 was presented which including £7k income from hire of the hall but before any building maintenance costs showed a surplus of £8k. Regular maintenance costs (mainly cleaning) for all buildings totals approx. £3k leaving £5k available for other maintenance which has to cover not only repairs but also

replacement of furniture and equipment. This demonstrates how reliant we are on income from the hall to sustain our financial position.

During the year we were fortunate to be able to complete construction of the new Parish room without using any of the parish general funds thanks to our very generous donors.

Minor works to the church frontage and replacement of the gate on Highfield Approach still remain to be completed.

6. Offertory

The offertory has risen by an average of £70 per week compared with the annual average for 2020 reflecting the improved mass attendance following relaxation of Covid restrictions. More parishioners are now paying by standing order/direct credit to our bank account which has greatly assisted our regular income.

An analysis showed that there are a very small number of parishioners who together give about a third of the total offertory and this was seen as a significant risk to the parish finances. It was hoped that when the "Time, Talents & Treasure" programme is implemented one of the outcomes will be a reduction in this risk.

There was discussion about removing the collection box and reinstating the offertory plate but it was agreed to delay until we were satisfied that parishioners would be comfortable with this.

Fr. Paul noted that other parishes have successfully implemented a digital collection plate which allows people to pay by contactless credit or debit card. Chris agreed to investigate the cost of installing one in the church.

7. 150 Club

Fr. Paul has agreed to replace Fr. Mathew as titular head of the 150 Club and to liaise with Michael about publicising the club in the newsletter. The parish received £1.7k from the club in 2021 and it has been an important source of additional income for the last 37 years during which time it has contributed in excess of £45k to our funds.

8. Hall Strategy

The hall needs in the region of £50-£70k investment to maintain the fabric and bring it up to modern day standards. At the recent Parish Forum it was agreed that we should formulate a plan/strategy for the future of the hall including its use as a community asset and not just a church facility, the investment needed and sources of funding.

Sandra Portas the Diocesan Stewardship & Fundraising Co-ordinator to be contacted for assistance with grant funding applications and Fr. Paul to check whether the Diocese would be prepared to loan funds if required.

Chris to contact Martin Last (Architect) about drawing up plans for the redesign of the toilet facilities to incorporate an accessible toilet.

Andrew agreed to draw up a hall strategy in conjunction with a small working group.

9. Time, Treasure & Talents

It was agreed to run this programme after Easter on the three consecutive Sundays 1st, 8th & 15th May.

10. Property Matters

(a) Hall

Work Carried Out Since the Last Meeting

- Section of damaged concrete at car park entrance replaced by developer (at no cost to parish)

Future Work Required

- Improvements/repairs per Hall strategy
- Wire fencing at front to be renewed
- Gates to be repainted

(b) Church

Work carried out since the last meeting

- Nothing to report
- Future Work Required
- Minor pointing to ridge tiles and replacement of eaves pointing
- Window frames and soffits to be repainted
- Gutters and downpipes to be checked and cleared where necessary
- Remedial work to be carried out on floor repairs
- At the next Parish Forum Fr. Paul to raise establishment of a memorial garden along the right hand side of the church opposite the existing plaques

(c) Presbytery

Work carried out since last meeting

- Carpets, soft furnishings and old furniture and equipment replaced
- Future Work Required
- Both chimneys to be repointed and lead flashing re-dressed
- Remedial work to be carried out following the electrical inspection
- Garage to be repainted and guttering repaired
- Gutters and downpipes to be checked and cleared where necessary
- Fr. Paul to investigate the cost of a "Jack & Jill" door to be installed between his bedroom and the shower room

(d) Grounds

Work carried out since last meeting

- Beech hedging replaced at front of church and new borders established in rear garden by Paul & Chris Riches
- Future Work Required
- Tree stump in the rear garden to be removed (subject to agreement)

11. Any Other Business

- Mass times as shown on the noticeboard to be changed to show revised pattern
- Declan & Celia have volunteered to be the new Missio representatives and are currently in the process of ascertaining which parishioners have boxes

12. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 17th June 2022, 10.40am in the Garden Room

Minutes approved

Signed:

Chris Croker - Finance Committee Chairman

Date: